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SORGOS OR SWEET SORGHUMS (*Andropogon sorghum* var.).

The sorgos are primarily fodder-producing crops and give much larger yields per acre than either kafir, milo, or durra. Some varieties are quite leafy, and all have very sweet and juicy stems. The seed heads are considerably smaller and looser than those of kafir or milo and are made up of small, roundish grains which contain tannin. This tannin lowers their feeding value. The sorgos are grown over a large portion of the United States and as far north as Minnesota. They are an important feed crop in the semiarid belt, yielding from 6 to 8 tons of cured fodder per acre. In the more humid sections the yield is frequently much higher.

The sorgos are quite widely grown for the production of sirup. Sumac, Orange, Red Amber, and Minnesota Amber rank as sirup sorghums in the order given. Honey and Gooseneck, two varieties of little value as forage, are perhaps the best sirup producers.

Amber sorgo.—The Ambers are the earliest of the sweet sorghums. They are characterized by their small, slender stems, few leaves (seven to nine), and by their loose, open heads with long branches. Minnesota Amber is a medium-tall strain, very uniform, and marked by its large, flat, bluish colored hulls as long or longer than the seeds. Red Amber is rather better than the other Amber varieties for fodder. Its stems are very tender, juicy, and very sweet. The seeds are inclosed by rather elongated, smooth, red hulls.

Orange sorgo.—The Orange sorgos are somewhat later than the Ambers. The stalks are juicy and sweet and are much stouter. The leaves are more numerous and broader, and the heads are heavier and more compact. The hulls are dark or red in color and are shorter than the seeds.

Planter sorgo.—The Planter sorgo resembles closely the Orange variety and differs from it only in that the head is larger and light colored in appearance, owing to the paler hulls. These hulls are quite pointed and partially inclose the light brick-red seeds. The branches of the heads are either erect or drooping. It is a late variety and when attacked by chinch bugs lodges very badly.

Sumac sorgo.—The Sumac sorgo is taller and later than the Orange variety. Its stems are more juicy and sweet and much more abundant in leafage than any of the other sorgos. The head is rather small, compact, and dark red. This color is given by the small red seeds, which are only partially inclosed by short, dark-colored hulls.

Planting.—The earliest plantings should be made about three or four weeks later than the season for Indian corn. Medium-early plantings usually give the best results in the humid belt. Late plantings are preferred in the drier regions, because they offer less opportunity for the cured forage to dry out before feeding time. The sorgos are frequently planted in 3-foot rows, so that the crop may be cultivated. This requires 12 to 20 pounds per acre. If the crop is drilled or sown broadcast, from 1 to 2 bushels per acre should be used.

Cultivation.—The sorgos should be cultivated much the same as Indian corn. They may be given two or three harrowings while the plants are small, and as soon as sufficient growth is made the crop should be given a fairly deep and thorough cultivation. Two or three subsequent and shallower cultivations are desirable. If seeded in close drill rows, the crop should be harrowed early and cultivated later in the season with a weeder.

Harvesting.—For the best quality and yield of fodder the crop should be cut in the late dough stage. If planted in 3-foot rows, the crop should be cut with a corn harvester and put in shocks. If planted in close drill rows or broadcasted, the crop may be cut with a broadcast binder or with a mower and put in shocks or cocks.

Feeding.—If cut at the proper stage, the sorgos make an excellent supplemental feed for work horses and cattle. They are probably fed more largely as green feed than any other crop. The grain is not equal in quality to that of kafir or milo.

Suggestions.—These varieties should be planted in a similar manner, so that the comparative yields may be had for the different ones tested. As the rate of seeding materially affects the yield of the crop, it is suggested that at least three plantings be made with drill rows 8, 18, and 36 inches apart, cultivating the two wider plantings. In this way every farmer will be able to determine the best rate of seeding and the best variety for his locality.

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